

**LARAMIE COUNTY
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT
ANNUAL REPORT
2021-2022**



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Laramie County Conservation District

Staff and Board of Supervisors

Staff:

- 🕒 Shaun Kirkwood, LCCD Manager - Responsible for the day-to-day management and functions of the Laramie County Conservation District. The coordination, organization, and timelines of meeting all conservation goals and objectives within Laramie County.
- 🕒 Rex Lockman, Wildlife and Range Specialist - Provides technical assistance to landowners on grazing management, grass seeding recommendations, weed issues, problem wildlife, and wildlife habitat improvement.
- 🕒 Dale Beranek, Tree Technician - Responsible for acquiring state and local Living Snow Fence funding, LSF implementation and maintenance. Windbreak designs, drip irrigation, and other program areas.
- 🕒 Kathy Cooney, Financial Coordinator - Responsible for the Laramie County Conservation District's accounts payables/receivables, payroll, monthly budget reports, assists with annual audit, and annual budget.
- 🕒 Jeff Geyer, Water Specialist - Responsible for conserving, enhancing, and sustaining Laramie County's surface and groundwater resources through the promotion of healthy watersheds and sustainable use of water supplies. Responsible for implementing water quality monitoring and BMPs, stream and riparian improvements, aquifer recharge opportunities, and water developments or rehabilitations using grant opportunities or other means.
- 🕒 Clark Young, Tree Specialist - Responsible for community tree health, windbreak designs, acquiring state and local Living Snow Fence funding and other program areas.
- 🕒 LCCD staff, Education and Public Outreach - Responsible for educating and informing Laramie County residents about the responsible use and care of their natural resources through classroom visits, field trips, community presentations, and public events. Staff help to promote public awareness of all Laramie County Conservation District programs and announcements through print, radio, television, and social media platforms.

The Laramie County Conservation District has a five-member Board of Supervisors. These Board of Supervisors serve a four-year term and are comprised of three rural (living outside of a municipality), one urban (living inside of a municipality), and one at-large (either rural or urban).

Board of Supervisors:

- 🕒 Tom Farrell, Chairman (Urban), oversight of water conservation in Laramie County.
Term of office - 2021 to 2024
- 🕒 Jay Berry, Member (Rural), oversight of forestry conservation in Laramie County.
Term of office - 2019 to 2022
- 🕒 Kevin Wells, Vice Chairman/Treasurer (Rural), oversight of wildlife & range conservation in Laramie County.
Term of office - 2021 to 2024
- 🕒 Ann Sanchez, Secretary (Rural), oversight of education and public outreach of conservation in Laramie County.
Term of office - 2019 to 2022
- 🕒 Casey Epler, Member (At-large), oversight of agricultural conservation in Laramie County.
Term of office - 2021 – 2024

Financial Summary:

The Laramie County Conservation District finances are reviewed monthly by the Laramie County Conservation District, Board of Supervisors, and the District Manager. The Laramie County Conservation District completes an annual certified public accountant audit annually. Results and findings of the LCCD audit are then reported by the LCCD to the Wyoming Department of Audit.

The Laramie County Conservation District reports its annual budget to the Laramie County Commissioners, the Laramie County Clerk, and the Wyoming Department of Audit. The Laramie County Conservation District's annual budget is posted on its website for the public. The following is a brief synopsis of last year's expenditure.

BEGINNING CASH ON HAND JULY 1, 2021-----\$2,305,875.64

Income

Seedling Tree Program-----	\$192,564.64
Living Snow Fence Program-----	\$20,000.00
Water Program-----	\$268,377.35
Wildlife & Range Program-----	\$64,091.81
Mill Levy-----	\$1,212,757.60
Other-----	\$64,037.09

TOTAL INCOME -----\$4,127,704.13

Expenses

Administration-----	\$190,257.37
Operations-----	\$3,134,957.66
Indirect Cost -----	\$224,346.51
Capital Outlay-----	\$2,220.54

TOTAL EXPENSES-----\$3,551,782.08

ENDING BALANCE-----\$575,922.05

RESERVE ACCOUNTS-----\$599,658.00

Administration:

Accounting:

Preparation of the Laramie County Conservation District 2021/2022 budget was in accordance with state statutes and submitted to the Laramie County Commissioners, Wyoming Department of Audit, Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts and Wyoming Department of Agriculture. All monthly, quarterly, and federal government reports are filed by the LCCD in a timely manner.

Funding:

The Laramie County Conservation District relies on the ½ mill levy that is before voters every four years. The Laramie County Conservation District utilizes this base funding (\$1,212,757.60) allowing the LCCD to apply for matching grants to increase natural resource conservation.

Laramie County Conservation District Headquarters:

The Laramie County Conservation District broke ground in April 2021 for its new headquarters building. Design and construction oversight was by the architect team of Plan One. HQ construction will be completed by Five-R General Contractor. Completion and move in slated for September 2022.

Meetings and committees:

- 🕒 Wyoming Small Acreage Issues Team
- 🕒 Wyoming Water Development Committee
- 🕒 NRCS State Technical Committee Meetings
- 🕒 Laramie County GIS Executive Meetings
- 🕒 Wyoming Weed and Pest Inter-Agency Committee
- 🕒 Wyoming Water Forum
- 🕒 Laramie County Commissioner's Meetings
- 🕒 State Engineers Board of Control Meeting
- 🕒 LCCC AG Advisory Committee Meeting
- 🕒 Area II Meeting in Douglas
- 🕒 Pole Mountain Grazing Association
- 🕒 Wyoming Resource Education Days
- 🕒 Cheyenne Greenway Committee Meetings
- 🕒 Rooted in Cheyenne Committee Meetings
- 🕒 LWG-Platte, Goshen, and Laramie Counties
- 🕒 Society for Range Management Meetings
- 🕒 Wyoming Board of Agriculture
- 🕒 Wyoming Association of Special Districts

Training:

- 🕒 Laramie County Appointed Board Training
- 🕒 Winter Tree Care Workshop-Greeley CO
- 🕒 WCDEA Winter Training
- 🕒 Pro-Green Expo/Arborist Recertification
- 🕒 WACD Supervisor Training
- 🕒 WACD Convention

Grants 2021/2022:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 🕒 Laramie County Public Works:
Living Snow Fences - \$10,000.00 | 🕒 Wyoming Game and Fish Department:
Crow Creek - \$11,450.95 |
| 🕒 Wyoming Department of AG:
\$16,858.91 | 🕒 Great Plains-Native Fish
\$35,000.00 |
| 🕒 Department of Environmental Quality:
\$15,750.00 | 🕒 NACD Technical Assistance:
\$50,000.00 |
| 🕒 Wyoming Water Development Commission:
\$440,166.50 | 🕒 Pheasants Forever:
\$7,605.84 |
| 🕒 U.S Forest Service:
\$117,995.01 | 🕒 City of Cheyenne
\$7,906.00 |
| 🕒 Wyoming Wildlife Natural Resource Trust
\$10,000.00 | 🕒 Curt Gowdy State Park
\$4,500.00 |

Water Program:

The Laramie County Conservation District has a goal to conserve, enhance and sustain Laramie County's surface and groundwater resources through the promotion of healthy watersheds and sustainable use of water supplies.

- 🕒 The Laramie County Conservation District finalized the conversion of the Laramie County library infiltration basin into a bio retention basin. Implementation will aid in water quality discharge into Crow Creek, reduction of water needs through selection of drought tolerant plant species, which will provide diverse habitat for multiple species leading to educational purposes. Grant funding through the WDA/Specialty Crop Block Grant Program was awarded in the sum of \$24,500.00 with matching funds in Laramie County Conservation District time and community volunteer time.
- 🕒 The LCCD completed the altering of Dry Creek and continued the revegetation of 750 linear feet of stream bank on Dry Creek to restore floodplain connectivity and sediment load downstream in Laramie County. Funding for the project came through the WDA/Water Quality Program and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- 🕒 The Laramie County Conservation District coordinated with U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Game and Fish Department to focus on expanding the central segment of Lodgepole Creek that remains perennial in Laramie County. The overall goal is to restore riparian and stream health on this segment of Lodgepole Creek through the creation of a riparian pasture, demonstrating the benefits of a healthy channel to county residents.
- 🕒 The Laramie County Conservation District began water sampling of Crow Creek within Cheyenne city limits. Sampling is an attempt to locate potential sources of Escherichia coli (E. Coli) and Total Suspended Solids (T.S.S.). Sampling began May 2022 and ended September 2022.
- 🕒 The Laramie County Conservation District received funding from WDEQ for the 100%-design of the second restoration phase on Dry Creek within the Cheyenne Business Parkway Natural Area. The design connects the lower Phase II scope of work to the existing upstream Phase I section, which the LCCD implemented this year. The design completely removes Dry Creek from its existing channel to reduce continued erosion and sediment load while restoring Dry Creek sinuosity and floodplain connectivity to maintain a healthy riparian.

Wildlife and Range Program:

The Laramie County Conservation District strives to create healthy habitat on both small and large acreage through development, management, and enhancement of native landscape for wildlife, livestock, and people.

🌀 The Laramie County Conservation District, with help from Curt Gowdy State Park, and Wyoming Game and Fish Department completed the second year of monitoring the control effort of cheatgrass and other weeds in Curt Gowdy State Park. Planning and grant writing was started for the second phase of spraying cheatgrass on Curt Gowdy state park. LCCD is also working with the U.S. Forest Service to spray portions of the Pole mountain unit of the Medicine Bow National Forest as part of this project. This will all be completed in the spring of 2023.

🌀 The LCCD's no-till drill was rented out 37 times this past year to seed areas where the soil had been disturbed. By seeding disturbed areas promptly, reduction in weed establishment can be reduced.

🌀 The Laramie County Conservation District completed nine livestock watering projects this past year with funding from the Wyoming Water Development Commission, "Small Water" Development Program.

🌀 The Laramie County Conservation District, with help from the U. S. Forest Service, maintained three livestock watering systems on the Pole Mountain area of the Medicine Bow National Forest.

🌀 The Laramie County Conservation District continues to assist local permittees in monitoring vegetation production and utilization on the Belvoir (City of Cheyenne) and on the Pole Mountain unit of the Medicine Bow National Forest. Utilization is monitored on grazing allotments to ensure less than 50% of the vegetation is used by livestock. The LCCD assisted with monitoring roughly 43,000 acres of rangeland.

🌀 The Laramie County Conservation District assisted 57 Laramie County residents living on small and large acreage in identifying proper acreage and pasture management. Recommendations and education address regional seeding recommendations, noxious weed control, grazing management, pasture health and grazing utilization.

🌀 The Laramie County Conservation District assisted the Wyoming Game and Fish Department with its annual Sharp-tailed Grouse surveys. These surveys benefit the Wyoming Game and Fish Department in monitoring the population of Grouse in Laramie County.

🌀 Laramie County Conservation District is working in cooperation with Cheyenne-High Plains Audubon Society on the Native Pollinator Island Program. This program funded by Change X/Microsoft provides native wildflower pollinator seed mix to landowners to plant on leach fields in Laramie County. The additional moisture from the leach field is believed to help these wildflowers flourish which will benefit pollinators as well as wildlife.

Tree Program:

Seedling Tree Program:

The Laramie County Conservation District continues to offer low-cost seedling trees to the residents of Laramie County for conservation plantings while providing community outreach in maintaining a healthy tree canopy.

- ② Sold 33,485 seedling shrubs, evergreens, and trees for a total of 1,540,299 since 1988.
- ② Sold/installed 704 rolls of 6-foot-wide fabric mulch and sold 27 rolls of 4-foot-wide fabric mulch.
- ② Completed 188 windbreak/living snow fence Forest Stewardship Plans.
- ② Completed 23 drip irrigation designs for water conservation use.
- ② In the spring of 2022, 98 private windbreak/living snow fence tree plantings were established. This equals 17,533 shrubs, evergreen and trees planted, or the installation of 130,453 linear feet/24 miles of tree row.
- ② Assisted 219 Laramie County residents with tree related issues including insect, disease, wildlife, watering, and other tree health concerns.
- ② The Laramie County Conservation District Tree Specialist and Tree Technician hosted two tree planting classes aimed at the do-it-yourself landscaper. The planting classes presented by the LCCD were aimed toward smaller stock planting geared towards the best planting techniques for the best results. Thirty-one Laramie County residents attended the class.

Living Snow Fence Program:

The Laramie County Conservation District contracts with both Laramie County Public Works and the Wyoming Department of Transportation to install Living Snow Fences along Laramie County's roads, highways, and interstates for the control of drifting snow. Control efforts keep roads safe and open during winter weather conditions also reducing road maintenance costs and traditional wood fence expenses short and long term.

- ② This past year, two new Living Snow Fence sites were established. The total number of LSF sites throughout Laramie County is 284. At this year's sites, 342 total evergreen trees were planted, totaling 2,880 feet of tree row installation. This adds .16 miles or 860 feet of road protection to the 34.90 miles already installed in Laramie County.

Education Program:

The Laramie County Conservation District is responsible for the education of Laramie County residents regarding wise use, care, and management of all natural resources. Utilizing public awareness of LCCD programs through in person education, print, radio, television, and social media platforms.

Classroom and field trip instruction:

🕒 The Laramie County Conservation District staff presented a variety of educational programs on natural resources, conservation, outdoor recreation, and related topics. This year the LCCD presented 13 programs to 568 students. Presentations consisted of classroom visits, to the annual Cowbelles AG Expo, to the Wyoming Game and Fish Outdoor Expo, to the Girl Scout rendezvous with girls from Wyoming, Nebraska, Colorado, Montana, and Utah.

🕒 The Laramie County Conservation District worked with local elementary students in hatching, raising, and releasing Quail chicks. This project helped students understand the life cycle of these birds and their need for habitat.

Information program:

🕒 The Financial Coordinator maintains the LCCD website at lccdnet.org. Multiple Facebook and Instagram posts are uploaded to the LCCD social media weekly. The LCCD published three newspaper inserts, one Report on Progress and numerous newspaper and radio notices.

Public events:

The Laramie County Conservation District participated with a presentation or informational outreach at the following events:

- 🕒 Proper Tree Planting Techniques
- 🕒 Wyoming State Fair
- 🕒 Laramie County Fair
- 🕒 Audubon cleanup along Dry Creek
- 🕒 Rooted in Cheyenne planting day spring and fall
- 🕒 Home and Garden Show
- 🕒 Southeast/Albin Farm Show
- 🕒 Rooted in Cheyenne Neighborhood Night Out
- 🕒 Wyoming Bee College
- 🕒 Sportsman's Expo

Laramie County School District Science Fair:

Each year the Laramie County Conservation District staff help judge local science fair events. Last year the LCCD staff judged events at Pioneer Park, and Baggs Elementary Schools. Staff also judged at the LCSD, All District Science Fair.

The Laramie County Conservation District also selected the best Natural Resource Project for each grade at the All-District Science Fair of Laramie County. Last year's winners were:

5th Grade – Eli S.: “Soil Erosion”

7th Grade – Makaila M.: “Cheatgrass vs. Soil Nutrients”

Special Projects:

Community Enhancement:

The LCCD provided technical assistance, funding, and implementation of up to \$1,000.00 for each of the following Laramie County projects:

- 🕒 The Pointe Subdivision of Cheyenne: The Laramie County Conservation District provided funding to purchase and install five containerized trees to plant in the boulevards around the Pointe greenway.
- 🕒 Laramie County Fire District #3: The Laramie County Conservation District provided funds to plant seedling trees and install fabric mulch perpendicular to the Fire Station in Albin WY.
- 🕒 Laramie County Fairgrounds: The Laramie County Conservation District provided funding to purchase six deciduous trees. The LCCD staff and Archer Complex employees will plant and maintain the trees at the Archer Complex/Fairgrounds.
- 🕒 Botanic Gardens of Cheyenne: The Laramie County Conservation District provided funds to purchase replacement shrubs for the existing windbreak bordering Carey Avenue.
- 🕒 Town of Pine Bluffs: The Laramie County Conservation District provided funding to purchase six containerized trees for the town cemetery.

Annual Community Enhancement Funding:

- 🕒 Laramie County School District #1 and #2: The Laramie County Conservation District provided 1,230 seedling evergreen trees, one, to every second grader in Laramie County. This is funded through the LCCD, Community Enhancement Program.
- 🕒 Rooted in Cheyenne: Through the LCCD Community Enhancement Program, the LCCD donated \$5,000.00 to Rooted in Cheyenne to continue street tree establishment in Cheyenne.

Cheyenne Business Parkway Natural Area:

The LCCD has continued management of the Cheyenne Business Parkway Natural Area. The natural area is a 101-acre parcel along Dry Creek in the LEADS property east of Cheyenne. Plans for the park include natural resource education and demonstration areas.

Projects completed in the Cheyenne Business Park Natural Area in the past year:

- 🕒 Herbicide application for control of Dalmatian toadflax, Canada thistle, Leafy spurge, Cheatgrass and common mullein.
- 🕒 Monitored flow and water quality of Dry Creek.
- 🕒 Revegetated 750 linear feet of Dry Creek stream bank on south portion of Natural Area.
- 🕒 Installed low-tech restoration structures in Dry Creek.
- 🕒 Mowed walking trails in the Cheyenne Business Parkway Natural Area.
- 🕒 Completed waste management and public awareness of pet waste in the Natural Area.

Partner in Conservation Awards:

The LCCD awards individuals annually who assist in helping the Laramie County Conservation District fulfill its mission of conservation in Laramie County. This year the Laramie County Conservation District recognized:

- 🕒 Lorie Chesnut - volunteer and partner in conservation/through Cheyenne High Plains Audubon.
- 🕒 Brenda Cowley - partner in conservation and public outreach through the LCCD.
- 🕒 Chris Vercelli - partner in conservation through The Laramie County Conservation District.
- 🕒 Jackie Roaque - partner in conservation through the U.S. Forest Service.

Laramie County Conservation District

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